



Health & Wellness

3PL & Fulfillment Guide



How health
& wellness
trends are
reshaping
logistics
and supply
chain strategy

One-size-fits-all logistics no longer work. Aging populations and Gen Z/Millennials have distinct delivery, packaging and service expectations, requiring flexible logistics networks

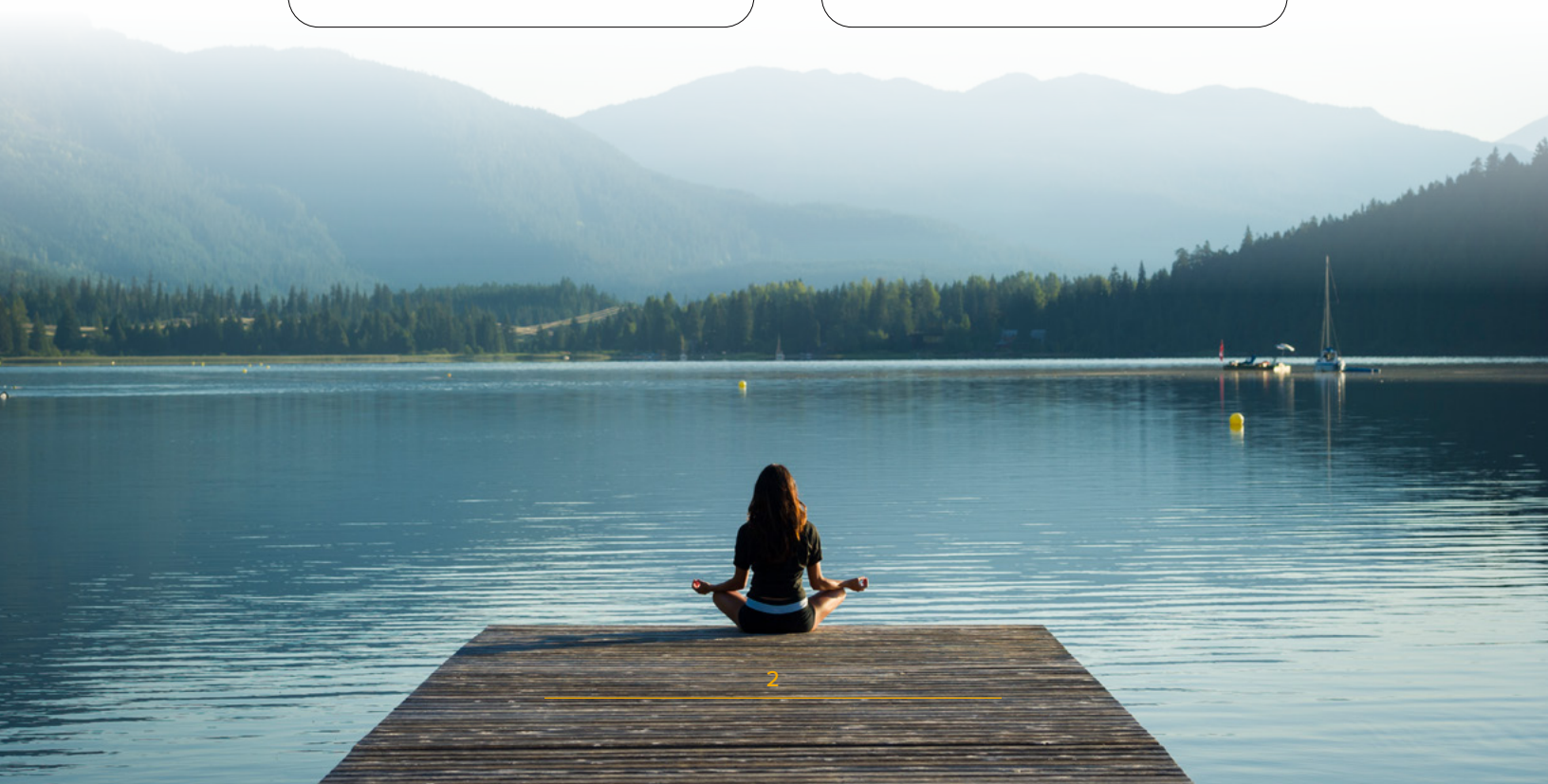
Wellness is now a core economic and logistics growth driver. The global health and wellness sector now represents more than [6% of global economic activity](#).

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Personalization and functional nutrition add operational complexity. Customized kits, subscriptions and benefit-driven products increase kitting demands, SKU proliferation, compliance requirements and data-driven fulfillment needs.

Trust and sustainability are logistics responsibilities. Accurate traceability, quality control, reliable delivery and measurable sustainability practices directly influence brand credibility and consumer loyalty.

Consumer behaviour is redefining supply-chain expectations. Preventive care, ecommerce and digital health adoption are driving faster delivery, greater transparency, and more.




Introduction:

The global health and wellness landscape is undergoing a profound transformation.

Consumers, especially younger generations, are redefining what “healthcare” means, shifting from reactive treatment to proactive wellness, prevention, mental health and personalized care. This shift is reshaping product categories, accelerating ecommerce adoption and raising expectations for speed, transparency and scientific credibility.

These changes are fundamentally altering how health and wellness products move through the supply chain. Pharmaceuticals, functional nutrition, skincare, diagnostics and connected medical devices now require more specialized handling. Logistics leaders are facing tighter temperature-control requirements, rapid SKU expansion, and the rise of direct-to-consumer models that demand precision and speed.



This guide explores the consumer-driven forces reshaping North America’s wellness economy, how they are affecting health and wellness logistics infrastructure, and how logistics leaders can harness forward-looking supply chain solutions to serve their customers better.



The global health and wellness sector is valued at roughly **\$7 trillion**

Health and wellness sector overview:

The global health and wellness sector, valued at roughly **\$7 trillion** according to NielsenIQ, now represents more than 6% of global economic activity and continues to expand rapidly. Forecasts project annual growth of 7.3%, far

outpacing global GDP. Consumer engagement is also rising. According to [research by McKinsey](#), 84% of U.S. consumers consider wellness a “top” or “important” priority, reflecting a sustained shift toward healthier lifestyles.

How societal shifts are reshaping wellness demand

North America is undergoing profound demographic and cultural changes that are reshaping the wellness landscape. Canada’s population is aging faster than ever. According to Statistics Canada, as of July 2023, 7.6 million Canadians, or **19% of the population**, were 65 or older, a share expected to reach up to 23% by 2030. The United States Census Bureau reports the U.S. is on a similar trajectory, with older adults projected to **outnumber children by 2035**. Longer life expectancy, declining birth rates and the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation are accelerating this shift and expanding demand for healthy aging solutions.

At the same time, younger generations are redefining wellness. McKinsey research shows nearly 30% of Gen Z and millennials in the U.S. say they prioritize wellness “a lot more” than a year ago, which is significantly higher than older cohorts. Rising burnout, worsening self-reported health and the constant influence of social media are fueling this heightened engagement. In the [2025 Monitor Report](#) released in January 2026 by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), the percentage of adults reporting poor mental health increased from 26.2% in 2020 to 29.0% in 2025, while those reporting frequent mental distress increased from 16.8% to 18.7% within the same time frame. In tandem, younger consumers encounter wellness content more frequently and act on it more readily, driving rapid adoption of preventive health practices, mental wellbeing tools and functional products.

Together, these forces are broadening and diversifying the wellness market. Older adults are driving demand for healthy aging solutions, while younger consumers are accelerating interest in preventive health, mental wellbeing and functional products. Wellness has become a core lifestyle priority, not a discretionary choice. This shift was intensified by the pandemic and ongoing concerns about mental and physical health.

Rising rates of poor self-reported health are pushing consumers to seek new tools to support their wellbeing, fueling rapid growth in categories like wearable tech, functional nutrition and organic skincare. Social media is amplifying this momentum, with wellness routines and health tracking devices dominating social media platforms and increasing awareness of the expanding range of products available.



How health and wellness trends are affecting logistics:

1. Wellness spans generations, but they spend differently

Research from McKinsey states that Gen Z and millennials account for just 36% of U.S. adults, yet they generate more than 41% of all wellness spending. At 35%, adults aged 58 and older represent a similar share of the population but contribute only 28% of total wellness spend.

Younger and older consumers also diverge in how they allocate their wellness dollars. Essential categories like oral care, cold and flu remedies and personal hygiene see similar purchase rates across age groups. However, younger consumers spread their spending across a much broader set of discretionary wellness products, from health tracking devices and massage tools to IV drips and beauty or mindfulness apps. They're more willing to experiment with these products and are quicker to adopt digital solutions.

Older consumers concentrate their spending on a narrower set of traditional health products such as vitamins, pain relief and eye care, and participate far less in emerging or tech-enabled categories, likely reflecting lower familiarity or comfort with newer wellness innovations.

Gen Z and millennials generate more than 41% of all wellness spending. At 35%, adults aged 58

Key takeaways for logistics leaders:

Aging and wellness trends across generations create new operational demands for logistics networks, including:

- **Divergent delivery expectations.** Older consumers prioritize reliability, clarity and predictability, while younger consumers expect speed, flexibility and strong digital visibility throughout the delivery journey.
- **Greater need for accessible packaging.** Easy-open designs, clear labelling and user-friendly instructions are essential to support consumers across all age groups.
- **Dependable delivery windows.** Logistics networks must accommodate varying routines and preferences, ensuring consistent, on-time delivery for different demographic needs.

You can read more about more direct-to-consumer fulfillment solutions offered by [Metro Supply Chain here](#).





2. Prevention is becoming the new healthcare

With an overwhelming amount of information at their fingertips, consumers, especially younger generations, demonstrate a proactive rather than reactive approach to healthcare.

Across markets, consumers are increasingly prioritizing illness prevention over treatment. Mintel reports [9 in 10 US women](#) express a strong desire to take charge of their health. In 2025, over [two-thirds of consumers](#) across Canada and the United States labelled themselves as being proactive in improving their health and wellness, signifying a clear focus on healthier lifestyles.

Key takeaways for logistics leaders:

As consumers increasingly invest in preventive health products, such as supplements, wearables, diagnostics and functional foods, logistics networks must handle a growing volume of sensitive, regulated or time-sensitive items.

- **Prepare for higher volumes of sensitive and regulated products.** Preventive health categories often fall under stricter regulatory oversight and require more controlled handling than general consumer goods. Logistics providers must manage more complex compliance requirements, ensure proper documentation and maintain processes that meet FDA, Health Canada, GMP and/or GDP standards. This raises the bar for operational discipline and audit readiness. [Read more on navigating healthcare compliance requirements here.](#)
- **Strengthen temperature-controlled and specialized storage capabilities.** Many preventive health products, probiotics, diagnostics and certain supplements require refrigerated, humidity-controlled or secure environments.
- **Build capacity for faster, more frequent replenishment cycles.** Proactive health routines drive recurring purchases, increasing order frequency and placing greater pressure on fulfillment speed and accuracy.
- **Prioritize reliability and seamless delivery.** Consumers integrating preventive products into daily habits expect consistent availability; stockouts or delays directly undermine trust and long-term engagement.

3. Functional nutrition category gains popularity

A 2025 [IPSOS What the Future: Wellness study](#) found that Canadians view eating well as the single most important factor influencing their health, ranking it above genetics, exercise, income and even access to doctors. This mindset is accelerating demand for a category known as “functional nutrition”, which includes fortified foods, supplements, drinks and other innovations targeting benefits such as energy, gut health, immunity and muscle or joint support.

This category is rapidly expanding, with about [half of consumers](#) in the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany, and nearly two-thirds of Gen Z and millennials, purchasing functional-nutrition products in the past year, with adoption even higher in China.

Key takeaways for logistics leaders:

A surge in functional nutrition demand is reshaping operational requirements for logistics networks in several important ways:

- **Broader product format complexity:** Functional nutrition spans fresh, fortified, powdered and probiotic items, each requiring distinct handling, packaging and storage protocols.
- **Increasing labelling and regulatory compliance requirements:** Functional nutrition products often carry health claims, ingredient disclosures, allergen statements and country-specific regulatory requirements. A 3PL must provide rigorous compliance workflows, version-controlled labelling processes, traceability systems and the ability to manage market-specific packaging or relabelling at scale.

- **More varied storage environments:** Products may need ambient, refrigerated or tightly controlled conditions, increasing the need for flexible facility infrastructure.
- **Robust omnichannel fulfillment.** Logistics networks must keep retail shelves stocked while simultaneously supporting growing direct-to-consumer demand with equal reliability.

4 Personalization is becoming a competitive advantage

According to [PwC's 2025 US Healthcare Consumer Insights Survey](#), at least one in five consumers would pay more out of pocket for personalized treatment (28%), continuous monitoring (22%) or unified digital platforms (19%). The willingness is even higher among Gen Z and Millennials. This is echoed by [Alana Sandel, Chief Experience Officer at Marketing for Wellness](#): “Many of today’s consumers no longer accept blanket health advice. They expect interventions—from nutrition to sleep strategies—to be tailored to the individual. What works for one person may fail for another.”

Canadians view eating well as the single most important factor influencing their health, ranking it above genetics, exercise, income and even access to doctors.

Personalization can come in the form of:

- Supplement packs
- Meal kits or functional-nutrition boxes
- Customized fitness or recovery boxes
- Smart-device linked wellness subscription (such as wearables that trigger personalized shipments)
- Skincare regimens
- Age-specific healthy-aging kits

Key takeaways for logistics leaders:

Many of the personalization interventions gaining traction have very real implications for logistics. The logistics function becomes a strategic differentiator, enabling brands to deliver tailored experiences at scale without sacrificing efficiency.

- **Expect higher operational complexity from personalization.** Customized supplement packs, meal kits, skincare regimens and recovery boxes require precise kitting, individualized order assembly and flexible workflows that can handle thousands of unique combinations.
- **Prepare for more frequent, subscription-based fulfillment.** Many personalized wellness products operate on monthly or even weekly replenishment cycles, increasing order frequency and placing pressure on speed, accuracy and inventory planning.
- **Strengthen data-driven fulfillment capabilities.** Smart device-linked subscriptions and continuous monitoring products rely on automated triggers for replenishment. Logistics networks must integrate with digital platforms to support real-time, personalized reorder flows.
- **Enhance packaging and handling precision.** Personalized kits often include multiple small components, fragile items or temperature-sensitive

products, requiring meticulous packaging, labelling and quality checks.

- **Build flexible capacity for rapid SKU proliferation.** As brands tailor products to individual needs, SKU counts rise quickly. Warehouses must support fast onboarding, dynamic slotting and scalable storage.

[Read more about various value-added services here.](#)

5 Younger consumers drive the adoption of digital and at-home health tools

Younger consumers are rapidly reshaping the wellness landscape through their adoption of digital health tools. [79%](#) of Gen Z use health tech such as wearables, telehealth and online prescription services every month, compared with 70% of all consumers.

This behaviour reflects a broader global shift toward technology-enabled self-management. Research from [Mintel](#) shows that ownership of wearable health tracking devices continues to climb: 42% of U.S. consumers, 40% of Canadians, 43% of consumers in China and 35% of adults in the UK now use smartwatches or fitness bands, with health tracking cited as the primary reason. These tools are becoming central to how people monitor their wellbeing, interpret their data and make decisions about nutrition, fitness and preventive care. These products introduce new logistics demands centred on direct-to-consumer fulfillment.



Key takeaways for logistics leaders:

- **Prepare for recurring, subscription-based fulfillment.** Digital health and at-home diagnostics rely on predictable, high-accuracy replenishment cycles that require strong inventory planning and automated order flows.
- **Strengthen reverse logistics capabilities.** Many connected devices and test kits require returns, cartridge swaps, or sample shipping, making efficient, trackable reverse logistics essential.
- **Invest in precision kitting and flexible assembly.** Personalized wellness kits and diagnostic bundles often involve multiple components that must be assembled accurately and quickly. [Read more here](#) on kitting for health and wellness brands.
- **Enhance visibility and tracking.** Younger consumers expect real-time updates, transparent delivery timelines and frictionless issue resolution.

6 Credibility and value gain importance

For brands, the new environment of product availability, abundance of choice and product placement saturation raises the bar on value and verifiable efficacy. [NIQ's research](#) shows a clear rise in skepticism toward unsubstantiated health claims, pushing consumers to scrutinize ingredient lists, certifications, clinical backing and the overall transparency of a brand's messaging. This dynamic rewards brands that pair science-backed functional benefits (e.g., protein, fibre, probiotics and sleep support) with accessible price points and credible storytelling.



Key takeaways for logistics leaders:

A growing emphasis on value, transparency and proven efficacy is reshaping how wellness products must move through the supply chain. For logistics leaders, this shift brings several important implications:

- **Accuracy and traceability are essential.** As consumers scrutinize ingredients, certifications and clinical claims, logistics teams must ensure precise lot tracking, expiry management and full chain-of-custody visibility.
- **Quality control must tighten for science-backed products.** Functional ingredients such as probiotics, protein and sleep support compounds often require controlled environments, disciplined storage and careful handling. Choose logistics partners with robust quality assurance protocols.
- **Transparency becomes part of the logistics offering.** Brands increasingly rely on logistics partners for data that supports credible storytelling: temperature logs, movement history and compliance documentation.
- **Reliability reinforces brand trust.** In a market where consumers question claims, consistent availability, accurate orders and on-time delivery strengthen credibility and help brands stand out.

7 Sustainability matters for reinforcing brand trust

Personal wellbeing and social responsibility are becoming tightly connected in how consumers evaluate health and wellness products. According to NielsenIQ, [70% of surveyed consumers](#) say it is important or very important that the wellness products they purchase are eco-friendly or ethically produced, whether through fairtrade sourcing, cruelty-free standards, or higher animal welfare practices. 71% are willing to pay more for products that meet these expectations.

Key takeaways for logistics leaders:

As a result, consumers increasingly reward brands that can demonstrate responsible operations end-to-end.

- **Sustainability is now a purchase driver.** Logistics operations must reinforce, not undermine, a brand's environmental and ethical positioning.
- **Packaging matters.** Rightsized, recyclable or reduced waste packaging is no longer optional; it's a differentiator consumers notice.
- **Optimize transportation to cut emissions.** Route optimization, consolidated shipments and efficient last-mile strategies directly support brands' sustainability claims.
- **Invest in greener facilities.** Energy-efficient warehouses, renewable power and low-impact materials strengthen credibility with eco-conscious consumers.
- **Make sustainability measurable.** Brands increasingly expect 3PL partners to provide data on emissions, waste reduction and efficiency improvements. [View Metro Supply Chain's latest sustainability report](#) on transparency of these data points.

Metro Supply Chain: Wellness-ready logistics capabilities

Metro Supply Chain is uniquely positioned to support the fast-evolving wellness economy, offering infrastructure and expertise that map directly to the operational pressures facing today's logistics leaders.

Compliant facilities for specialized handling

Metro Supply Chain's comprehensive network includes Health Canada-licensed and GMP-certified facilities equipped with temperature control, humidity monitoring and secure storage environments.

Industry-recognized licenses

Metro Supply Chain holds Drug Establishment, NHP Site and Medical Device Establishment licenses, ensuring all licensable activities are managed to the highest standards for healthcare logistics.

Robust quality assurance systems

By fully adhering to Canadian regulations, our internal quality assurance protocols, along with distinct zones for returns and quarantines, ensure superior quality control and successful inspections upon receipt.

Advanced traceability and compliance

With deep experience in GMP/GDP environments and Health Canada-aligned processes, Metro Supply Chain provides defensible lot tracking, expiry management, and chain-of-custody visibility.

Flexible, scalable fulfillment for SKU-dense categories

Metro Supply Chain's facilities are built for rapid SKU onboarding, dynamic slotting and high mix, low volume workflows, enabling brands to keep pace with fast innovation cycles.

Precision kitting and personalization capabilities:

Metro Supply Chain delivers agile, in-house packing and kitting services that accelerate speed-to-market while

reducing costs and operational risk. Our warehouses feature purpose-built co-packing and kitting zones designed for optimal flow and high productivity, enabling teams to handle large daily volume swings and support same-day ecommerce fulfillment.

Automation & system integrations:

Reduce risks and enhance production capacity with our [advanced technologies, including tools, integrations and automation](#), which are designed to streamline your operations.

Strong omnichannel and DTC fulfillment:

Metro Supply Chain's integrated retail and direct-to-consumer capabilities ensure consistent availability, fast delivery, and high pick-and-pack accuracy across every channel. Our tailored retail fulfillment solutions support master cartons, pallet preparation and all retailer-specific requirements.

Reverse logistics, recall management and device lifecycle support:

Metro Supply Chain manages end-to-end reverse flows for wellness products. This includes returns, refurbishments and recycling workflows completed with full serialization, quarantine controls and compliant disposition processes.

Sustainability-aligned operations:

With rightsized packaging automation, route optimization and energy-efficient facilities, Metro Supply Chain helps brands meet rising consumer expectations for eco-friendly and ethically aligned wellness products.



Ready to simplify and streamline your healthcare and wellness fulfillment operations?

[Contact us today](#) to schedule a consultation.

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